

SN. 09/725,607

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REMARKS

Claims 1-26 remain pending in this application for which applicant seeks reconsideration.

Amendment

The title has been amended to more closely follow the claims. Claims 1-13, 15-17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 25, and 26 have been amended to more clearly recite the invention, namely changing the preamble from "peripheral" to --image forming--. No new matter has been introduced.

Art Rejection

Claims 1-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Takimoto (USP 6,202,092). Applicant submits that the present amendment renders this rejection moot to the extent that Takimoto would not have disclosed or taught at least the history information transmitting means/step or acquisition means called for in the independent claims.

The present invention calls for an image forming device control system (and counterpart method) where history information storage means of the image forming device, such as a multifunction printer 100, stores history information obtained by executing an image processing a plurality of number of times with the image forming device, and including a user identification information of a user who used the image forming device, an operating mode of the image forming device and the number of sheets discharged from the image forming device. The information processing apparatus, such as a host computer 11, transmits a history information acquisition job to the image forming device, and the history information acquisition means thereof acquires the history information stored by the history information storage means in the image forming device according to the history information acquisition job. By storing history information obtained by image processing executed a plurality of number of times in the image forming device (instead of the network side such as the image processing apparatus (host computer)), and transferring the history information to the image

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processing apparatus in response to a request (history information acquisition job) therefrom, the burden on the network such as the memory capacity of the image processing apparatus can be reduced while making it possible to manage the detailed counter table for every user and every operating mode on the image forming device side.

Moreover, claims 1, 7, and 17 call for clearing the history information stored in the history information storage means when the history information is transferred to the image processing apparatus in accordance with the history information acquisition job. This can reduce the required memory capacity of the image forming device, which is generally historically limited.

Takimoto discloses a print system for managing the security of a printer shared on a network, and more particularly, for checking whether users have the authority to print or access the security data (col. 1, lines 7-10). Takimoto provides a print system with an access management program to allow a manager to monitor use of a shared printer (col. 2, lines 9-14). In Takimoto, if the request is a print request, a print request analyzing portion 22a of a server 2 judges from the print data the number of pages in the print job, the type of paper or paper feeder for the print job, and which, if any, special printing function is requested (step S7 in Fig. 2). A security validating portion 22b determines whether the requests are within the limits on the number of pages (step S8 in Fig. 2) and whether any requested special printing functions are allowed (step S9 in Fig. 2) based on the stored authority and statistical information of the user in the security data base, and decides authorization or non-authorization to print (col. 5, lines 3-13).

When the printer 3 prints the pages, a statistical information managing portion 22d of the server 2 tallies the number of printed pages to the current total for the type of paper used and the current total for the number of times special printing functions have been used, as appropriate. The updated security data base is stored on a file device 23 of the server 2 (col. 4, lines 7-12; Fig. 1).

Takimoto's printer 3 merely sends the print data to the server 2. Takimoto does not disclose or suggest anywhere sending or transmitting history information from the printer 3 to

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the server 2 or even seeking history information from the printer 3 by the server, let alone sending history information obtained by image processing executed a plurality of number of times from the printer 3 to the server 2. Moreover, Takimoto fails to teach or suggest storing the history information in the printer 3, let alone clearing the storage in the printer upon transferring the historical information to the server.

Based on these differences, Takimoto would have neither anticipated nor rendered obvious the present invention.

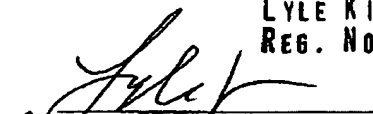
Conclusion

Applicant submits that claims 1-26 patentably distinguish over the applied references and thus urges the examiner to issue an early Notice of Allowance. Should the examiner have any issues concerning this reply or any other outstanding issues remaining in this application, applicant urges the examiner to contact the undersigned to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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